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Prophets at the Crossroads

BY ELMER DAVIS

IN these times of tribulation, when men in Spain and China call on the rocks to cover them, and the great and terrible day of the Lord may be just around the corner for everybody else, the most pertinent of all questions is "What shall we do to be saved?" Here come two evangelists* from England to show us the way of salvation; each knows what is the matter with us, and how to cure it. Unfortunately their diagnoses, and their remedies, are utterly different; and the resemblances between the authors only make life harder for the earnest truth seeker. Both Heard and Belloc insist that morality must have a religious sanction, both are rigorously logical, and both belong to the now popular either-or school of thinkers. Civilization, they agree, faces an inexorable alternative, either this or that; but their thisses are irreconcilable and even their thats are not the same. Heard sees civilization headed for collapse and chaos unless it accepts his gospel; to Belloc the alternative to salvation is communism, a fate worse than death.

GERALD HEARD

Belloc's book is by far the easier reading, and may be more briefly dismissed since his remedy—the return to Catholicism, of course—is a familiar one; you take it or leave it, according to taste. But since he feels that the present crisis is immediately due to economic dislocations (hastened and intensified, but not, he concedes, wholly caused, by the Reformation) he would implement the Catholic philosophy by the economic reforms set forth last year in his "Restoration of Property"—a recreation of the (possibly somewhat idealized) fifteenth century world of guild industry and peasant-owned farms. The substance of the book was delivered as lectures at Fordham last winter, and naturally in addressing his coreligionists Belloc did not have to offer much argument for the truth and necessity of Catholicism. The reader not already converted will be conscious of the omission. Non-Catholics will differ from many of his interpretations of history, but it must be remarked that he treats the Reformation, and the conditions that produced it, with an objectivity rare and admirable in a partisan of either side.

Not quite so much can be said for his treatment of current affairs. He is sure that the inescapable choice for civilization lies between Catholicism and communism; Cardinal Faulhaber might see it otherwise. It is fashionable nowadays to treat Protestantism, capitalism, parliamentary democracy, and other dominant factors of the nineteenth century as beneath discussion, but a book which never mentions fascism can hardly be called a complete picture of the contemporary world. To be sure Catholicism and fascism get along very well in Spain and Italy; but Belloc says nothing about Italy, and in his brief allusion to the Spanish war he is conscientious enough to mention the Moors, but not the Italians. Is it possible that he is ashamed of the company the Church keeps?

Mr. Gerald Heard is even surer than Belloc that unless we be born again we shall not enter into the kingdom of God—so sure that he makes only passing mention of economics, confident that if we seek the kingdom first, all things else shall be added unto us. This is, he holds, fundamentally a moral and religious crisis, but he dismisses Belloc's solution as no longer possible for thinking men. It was a mere phase of the Anthropomorphic Cosmology which produced the First Morality, the expression of a transcendent Creator's will. That picture of the universe was shattered by the successive blows of Newton, Darwin, and Freud. The destructive effects of "The Origin of Species by Natural Selection" were not at once apparent, because a generation brought up by pious parents retained their ethics, even after the ontological foundation was gone; but the second generation drew the logical conclusion and there followed the Second or Mechanomorphic Morality, seething with lust and red in tooth and claw, by which we all now live—at least, if Mr. Gerald Heard is correctly informed. "Ethics," he says, "must be the logical system of action built up from such general truths as can be discovered from an unbiased observation of reality." Such observation, by the dimmer light which shone till lately, indicated a mechanical universe which logically imposed on its inhabitants a compulsion to unlimited money-grabbing and fornication; this we must do, whether we enjoy it or not, and (since everyone behaves logically in the world of Mr. Heard) this is what we are all doing. But—glad tidings of great joy—materialism has now been disproved, the latest unbiased observations disclose a very different cosmic picture; and on that firm foundation the Third Morality not only can but must be erected. If not, "what we have called

Next Week

FALL ANNOUNCEMENT NUMBER

* *THE CRISIS OF CIVILIZATION. By Hilaire Belloc. New York: Fordham University Press.* 1937. $2.50.
THE THIRD MORALITY. By Gerald Heard. New York: William Morrow & Company. 1937. $2.50.

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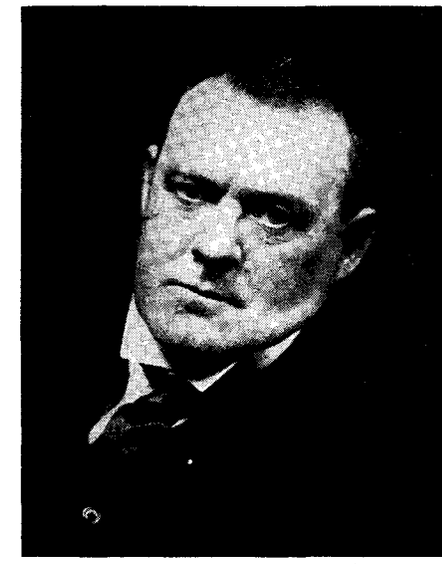
ethics will disappear and what we have called civilization will disappear with them." Either, or.

No sane man would hesitate long between such alternatives; but the penitent stumbling down the sawdust trail finds Mr. Heard detaining him. Since all morality must rest on a cosmological foundation, we must first learn what happy discoveries about the nature of the universe, discerned by the latest unbiased observation of reality, have delivered our souls from error's chain and made it logically permissible to sleep alone and like it. We know now that "the universe is simply a vast system of force-waves," and the world as we apprehend it is a mere mental construct out of such chips and splinters of reality as our senses are able to perceive—material selected under the influence of greed and fear; or, as they put it in India, an illusion based on desire.

Where Heard goes beyond India is in buttressing this view by the latest findings of Occidental science, or some of them. He has not much use for either the senses or the reason—the deeper truths lie in the unconscious; but it appears that scientific evidence which backs him up (unlike that which controverts him) is not a mere fallible selection based on greed and fear. The Principle of Indeterminacy plays a large part in it, and Rhine's experiments in extra-sensory perception, and a good deal of other material on which an unscientific reviewer is not competent to pass judgment. But its meaning is clear to the adept. Mr. Heard knows, for instance, that natural selection is only an exploded superstition; what causes the origin of species is cosmic rays from some super-nova, powerful enough to pierce, at intervals, the Heavyside layer. He knows, too, a good deal about what happens on the other side of Jordan—who is and who is not likely to inherit eternal life. He knows, in sum, that the universe is essentially one, that human personalities are "not separate wholes but parts of a single state of being"; and that if we only get rid of craving and try to merge ourselves into the Larger Life, "man may make any universe up to the standard of which he is prepared to live. . . . The one fundamental objective fact is that the energy-radiation will sustain and substantiate any construction creative desire calls upon it to support and fulfil." Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Apparently thou canst, after indoctrination in the Third Morality.

Not even dialectical materialism offers so bright a prospect of making up your own world as you go along. If man will only "realize his unity with all life and being" the troubles of these times will pass away. But a generation of vipers must be converted, and in the time of transition it is the duty of the adherent of the Third Morality to lead the "rationed life," aiming at "efficiency and innocency." The innocence is not an eremitic virtue; "teams" of the efficient and innocent should be formed, nuclear cells for the evangelization of the world; and fortunately a technique is available for the practice and strengthening of virtue.

Vegetarianism is part of it, not only because it is wicked to take animal life (though Heard reluctantly admits that we may have to kill dangerous bacteria till we can think of some more fraternal way to treat them) but because "the reflective, controlled type is vegetarian, the impulsive and impatient is the high-protein eater." *E.g.*, those patient, non-impulsive vegetarians, Adolf Hitler and Bernard Shaw. It is curious that Heard sanctions, by implication, the eating of beans, abhorrent to some of his forerunners. Deep breathing and correct posture, rhythm and the dance, are also conducive to virtue; omphaloscopy for



HILAIRE BELLOC

some reason is omitted. Teams of such mental-moral athletes, living "the life of interest-affection, a way of life which is a psychiatry, an economy, and a policy," may perhaps promote a new mutation in social evolution, even if no super-nova blows up in time to help them out. At least we must try it; "our choice is to go on to a new state of being, or end."

Thus the gospel according to Heard. It has its soft spots; in dealing with the problem of evil he has to come down to maintaining that outside of man, who causes evil by believing that the individual is an end in himself and not a phase of the Larger Life, there is really not nearly so much evil as people think. But all gospels have their soft spots, and this is no time to look a gift gospel in the mouth—especially a psychiatric gospel offered to a neurotic age teetering on the verge of lunacy. We have his word for it, however, that no morality is any good unless it is based on the latest cosmology; so it seems necessary to take another look at his unbiased observation of reality, even at the risk of being set down as what he calls a "rationalistic materialistic ethicist." (Belloc has too much respect for the English language to apply so barbarous an epithet even to the foulest heretic.)

There is a good deal of scientific evidence which tends to discredit a purely mechanistic interpretation of the universe; there also remains a good deal of evidence on the other side. Of the evidence cited by Heard, how much is fact, how much plausible hypothesis, and how much cockeyed error, no man yet knows (except Heard). The one thing sure is that, like all scientific evidence, it consists of selections from the phenomena of the universe apprehended by the human senses and integrated by the human mind. Heard's criterion is simple; such

(*Continued on page* 16)

Self-Knowledge

By CHARLOTTE WILDER

ON the strict boundary of farthest light,
There shows a hint of distance, opening clear,
Which is the vision's soon-exhausted sight,
Firing its own extension: so the deer

Might cleave himself a passage through the air,
Spurning the thicket, where his memories cower,
To seek a wider vantage; so the hare,
Startled from refuge by a chilling shower,

Tread down a bolder safety. Thus, I saw,
Truly, the self, move forward like a sun,
Shaking the shadows from its front of awe,
Itself, its movement and the vista, one:

Forced onward, like the hare, fleeing its fear,
Forever lured to freedom, like the deer.

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paid. The oats and the sheep are not theirs to eat, and must be sent still across the Channel to that absent, mythical owner, while the people of Crom who raised these things die of hunger in the midst of their rotted potatoes. Such was the famine of 1845 and no one who reads of it here will fail to understand the conditions of Ireland's poverty as well as the roots of the rebellions which tore her free of England's landlords.

This is the broad pattern of the book. It is filled in with a wealth of native color, speech, and manner of living, as unsparingly fertile, often exalted, as the meaning of the book is bitterly realistic. There are a dozen first-rate characterizations the author has built up with ease. The characters are so thoroughly and unrestrainedly alive that they are able to reflect, in their diverse roles, the history that shaped their existence. "Famine" is much the best work O'Flaherty has done.

Louisiana Melodrama

POINT NOIR. By Clelie Benton Huggins. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by AMY LOVEMAN

GENIUS bridges everything, talent much, but mere promise little. An Emily Brontë can produce wild, warped, theatrical characters, and by the force of some inward fire, by some passionate wildness of her own, breathe a vivacity into her work that is imperishable. A Julian Green can present inhibited, hag-ridden lives and make their macabre antagonisms compelling and plausible. But a Clelie Huggins, dealing like them with personalities overwrought and ingrown, only succeeds in making melodramatic and incredible their antipathies and sullen maladjustments. And the secret of Miss Huggins's failure lies in the lack of that quality which alone can make the abnormal take on the stamp of reality—a bold and vigorous imagination. Where she draws on experience for her material, as in the setting of her Louisiana plantation and in the dialect and mannerisms of the Negroes who serve the Sévigné family, her portrayal has freshness and interest. But the moment she strikes out on her own, when she begins to invent character and situation, she commences to flounder, and as her story advances to its grim conclusion it passes from ineptitude to improbability, and from improbability to melodrama. Moreover, it shifts its focus, for, having for its first third been centered about the child Ange-Marie, brought home from her convent school to attend the funeral of her grandfather, it becomes for the rest of its length a series of episodes in the life of her elders.

A stranger crew than the Sévigné family it would be hard to find. Madame Sévigné is so thrown from balance by the discovery that her husband had made unnecessary the sale of the home she hated by leaving her rich instead of poor that she dies insane. The elder of her sons is reduced to complete passivity by widowhood and the other so filled with pity for humankind that he kills the mulatto girl he loves rather than have her suffer the discriminations her race imposes. Her rigid daughter in her attachment to her home sacrifices all else to it, and her granddaughter, Ange-Marie, is baffled, as who would not be, by life as she sees it around her.

One need not be told by the publisher's blurb that Miss Huggins is young to feel complete immaturity in her writing. What makes that immaturity disturbing is not her failure to master the technique of her medium, not that she cannot dovetail the various elements of her story, not even that it has exaggerations of incident and characterization that are frequently absurd, but that it shows no sustained power of inventiveness, no grip on direction. Her characters create the impression of having outwitted their author; their actuality escapes her and their behavior, instead of appearing inevitable, merely is jerked into a false life by sensationalism. It would not be worth while to discuss Miss Huggins's book at length if it were all as bad as the worst of it, but there is a freshness and intensity to its opening chapters, a veracity to its description of locale, and a sincerity in its portrayal of the child Ange-Marie that make comprehensible the fact that Houghton Mifflin should on the promise of its beginning have awarded their fellowship prize to it. What Miss Huggins needs is more actual experience of living to correct her ideas of life.

Ambitious Fishing Village

MONDAY GO TO MEETING. By Kenneth Payson Kempton. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by PHIL STONG

MR. KEMPTON has given in this novel a complete picture of the manner of life in South Taniscot, Maine; a fishing village with mild ambitions to become a summer resort. He does it by interlocking the stories of widely varying types in the village—the delicate—except in spots—young love story of Cass and Allie; the less delicate but appealing love story of the widow who had to have a man to nurse, or not necessarily to nurse; the finely executed introspections of a supposed hypochondriac; the worries of the first decent banker in recent literature; the garrulous self-pitying of an old housekeeper; and eight or ten other stories.

From the jacket design of "Monday Go to Meeting."

This is a dangerous device. Stories designed this way are likely to separate like cheap French dressing, leaving some nourishing but wholly dissociated blobs floating around in a thin and unrelated medium. Mr. Kempton keeps his stories well-stirred and in a brilliant final chapter manages to bring nearly all of his characters on in one scene, the town meeting, where the significance of their various adventures to the inflexible social unity of South Taniscot is made plain. The three characters who do not appear for this climax are the three foreigners from distant Southern cities like Boston. The village has unconsciously crushed or rejected all of them.

There is too much description of the beauties of the Maine coast and vicinity in the early part of the book. It slows the story exactly where the story should not be slowed and it is not necessary. After a summer of Chamber of Commerce advertising, New Haven time tables, and vacation folders hardly a man can well be alive who has not seen tourists and lobsters in the water, near the water, or being pulled from the water at Old Penobscot, Old Kennebunkport, Old Bangor, or some other town with an odd name.

The pangs of conscience which some people feel over a bit of honest skipping will soon be forgotten, however, in the excitement of characterizations which are all subtle and convincing and robust. Even some bawdy, or at least ribald, implications are inoffensive because they are so natural to their people and so funny. Mr. Kempton is capable of such illuminating irony as the incident of Allie's shrewish mother, after having rated her daughter for a supposed moral offense, belatedly and cravenly putting a copy of "What a Young Girl Should Know" on Allie's pillow.

Mr. Kempton's first novel "Old Man Greenlaw" made him not quite the discovery the Discoverers' Club claims, but "Monday Go to Meeting" is a discovery.

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of Literature

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Death of the Sentence

IN the current *Atlantic Monthly*, Mr. Wilson Follett unmasks the strategy of the editor of this magazine and so forces the steering committee of the literary left to change its plans. Advantageously placed on this reactionary periodical, we have been masquerading as an enemy of enlightenment and so have wormed our way into the confidence and secrets of the Tories. We have been organizing our position so that, when the great hour came, we could turn Capitalism's own guns on the poor dupes that had trusted us. Mr. Follett has stopped that for good: he has exposed us as a revolutionist. Mr. Edwin Seaver, though he is not privy to the steering committee's intrigues, divined the same truth last June, when we incautiously permitted our agent to praise the speech that Mr. Earl Browder made at the Writers' Congress.

Mr. Follett accuses us of trying to destroy the English sentence and queasily admits that our attempt has pretty well succeeded. He selects us as representative of the Time Spirit, of which he is far from fond, and uses some of our writing to show how the sentence, as the centuries of mankind knew it, has disintegrated during the last generation. Precisely as scientists are trying to break down the atom and have chosen detonation as the most promising way, so contemporary writers are trying to explode the sentence so that none of its traditional (and logically indispensable) syntax will be left. The writers have had more success than the scientists, for on all levels from James Joyce to the *Daily Mirror*, the printed page is strewn with dismembered fragments of old-issue sentences. . . . An unhappy coincidence has us asserting, in the current issue of *Harper's*, that if the Utah schools taught us nothing else at least they gave us a sound knowledge of grammar.

Mr. Follett's brilliant article should be read by everyone who is interested in writing. It says much that needs saying and that cannot be said too often or too forcibly. Mr. Follett may be shocked by the admission, but we agree with him. We agree, that is, with some of his contentions. For, though he seems to be talking about only one thing, he is really talking about two things or more than two. We go all the way with him when he attacks slovenly writing, the kind of writing that results from careless and slipshod thinking; our sword and pen are at the service of his crusade. But when he attacks in the same terms the careful, calculated writing which departs from conventional syntax because it must depart from it in order to achieve its ends—we are constrained to denounce him as an obscurantist, a heresiarch, and a dangerous enemy of the good, the true, and the beautiful.

When it comes to the clear expression of exact meaning, we are more royalist than Mr. Follett. When thought is organizable in sentences we stand for its being so organized. We will support his efforts, and anyone else's, to make the English sentence say exactly what it means, as simply, as directly, as clearly, and as grammatically as possible. The sloppy, ambiguous, wretchedly carpentered sentences which he arranges according to an ascending scale of horror are fully as offensive to us as to him, and we deplore quite as much as he the ignorance and carelessness of writers and the slackness of editorial standards that allow them to get into print. The horrible example which he quotes from *The Saturday Review* caused us much more pain than he can possibly feel about it.

But the organization of thought in sentences in order to convey an exact meaning inescapably is one thing, and the representation of thinking and feeling in fiction is sometimes an entirely different thing. If a novelist were always to organize the thinking of his characters in complete sentences he would sometimes gravely misrepresent it, and in misrepresenting it he would create the very kind of ambiguity that Mr. Follett denounces. The sentence which he quotes from our novel is part of a passage (thirteen pages out of four hundred and seventy-one) which presents the reverie of a character at a time of intense emotional stress. It borrows a method from Joyce and is written in accordance with what the psychologists call free association. It presents a state of mind in which thought and feeling are not formulated in sentences. If it had been forced into sentences in the novel, its reality would have been destroyed. This passage is at one extreme; most of the book is at the other extreme, and consists of completely formulated thought expressed in rigorously grammatical sentences. In between the extremes there are various other stages of subjectivity, in which the sentences are formulated to the same degree that the thought and emotion they represent are formulated. What is wrong with that?

Mr. Follett says that it is anarchy and finds that the villain behind it is the subconscious mind. But it is certainly a novelist's right to deal with the unconscious if he wants to. When he undertakes to represent its effluence into consciousness he cannot organize thought into formal sentences, for the essence of such thinking is its lack of organization. When, in such contexts, he writes in the way that Mr. Follett deplores, he is completely harmonious with the spirit of the English language and the logic of prose. He is not an anarchist but a purist.

Mr. Follett does not accept that fact, and we can go only part way with him in the rest of his article. Grammar was made for man, not man for grammar; in fact, grammar is made by man. The traditions of syntax are not part of the physical foundations of the universe; they are merely empirical statements of principles which commonly facilitate clear communication. We must not so venerate the statement as to forget its objective. Even the most pedantic treatises of a century ago took account of ellipsis and elision, and sanctioned idiomatic constructions which seemed to violate the formal rules. Today, Professor Curme defines a sentence as "an expression of a thought or feeling by means of a word or words used in such form and manner as to convey the meaning intended." "To convey the meaning intended"—the reader's complete understanding of the writer's meaning, unhampered by esthetic shock, is everything. A sign outside our window says "Tarrytown eight miles"; another one says "STOP! Children Crossing"; and, at the moment, a neighbor trips over a lawnmower and says "Damn!" Only the last of those sentences observes the traditional syntactical form, but it would be foolish to call them poor English or to deny that they are completely clear. Sir Thomas Browne would not have written the first two in that way, but how else would Mr. Follett write them?

Syntax, like all the rest of grammar, has changed a good deal since "Religio Medici." While the language remains healthy, it will go on changing. But Mr. Follett must surely know that the best English prose today which sets out to convey exact ideas is as clear and as rigorous as any ever written. It is such prose that he should compare with earlier prose intended to accomplish the same end—he should not denounce a wholly different kind of prose because it does not do what it does not try to do.

Later on we will continue this argument, for we have still much to say on behalf of contemporary writing. But first we may have to clear the board of other critics of our style. A number of correspondents have objected to our vocabulary and our idioms. They say, in effect, that though we may write swell we don't write elegant. We will destroy them in the public interest and then come back and defend the modern style.

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Letters to the Editor: *A Champion of Ernest Thompson Seton*

From Frank M. Chapman

SIR:—In the interests of biographic accuracy may I, as a contemporary of Ernest Thompson Seton, add a footnote to Donald Culross Peattie's historic résumé of Seton's work published in *The Saturday Review of Literature* of September 18, 1937 (page 9)?

For all that Seton has accomplished, he has to thank only himself. His sole capital when he entered life was the inspiration of the born naturalist and the talent of the artist. He has never held a salaried position but at all times has supported himself and those dependent on him with the proceeds of his pen and brush. From the beginning it was his aim to achieve a financial independence which would permit him to devote himself to the study of nature. I could specify the occasion when, as a youth in New York City, he faced the world penniless but determined that he would consider no occupation that in some way did not advance his interests as a naturalist. Fortunately, Providence, through Elliott Coues, now sent him the commission of making drawings of birds for the Century Dictionary. As soon as circumstances permitted he returned to Manitoba to continue his studies of the birds of that then little-known Province. Thereafter, until he had achieved financial independence, he alternated or combined the life of the popular writer and illustrator with that of the student in field and studio.

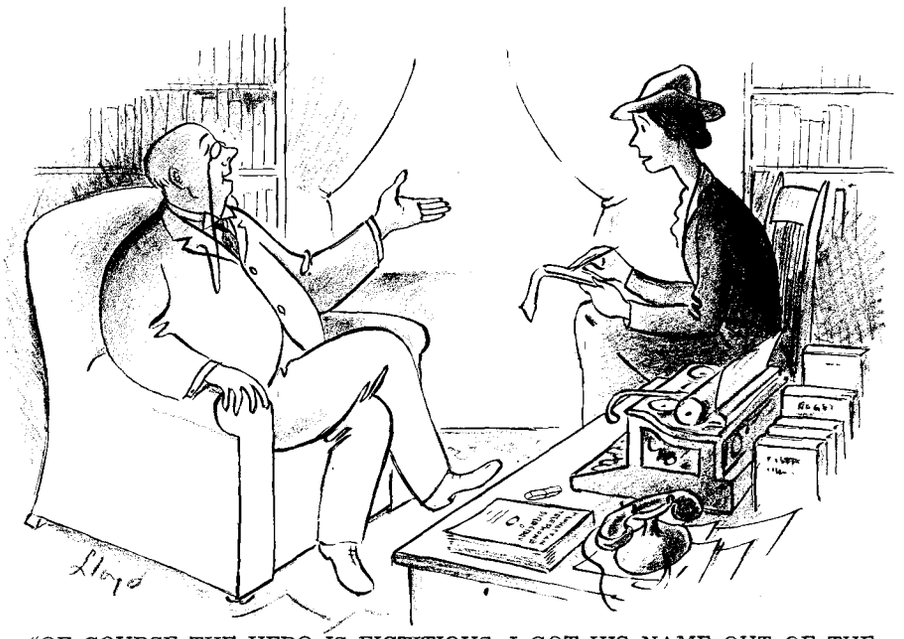
Within a few years he was in a position to go to Paris to study art. Returning in 1896, Seton, always the teacher, determined to establish a school of animal art. A building was secured at Tappan, New York, but, although he had published a work on the "Art Anatomy of Animals," Seton had neither the fame nor the funds to develop his plans and he was forced to abandon this undertaking and return to writing and illustrating as a means of support.

The success of his biography of "Lobo," a wolf, which had appeared in *Scribner's Magazine,* turned his attention to that type of literature. Seton believed that, just as man is more interested in his fellow than in his species, so he could arouse man's interest in animals by treating them as individuals. He wrote, therefore, not of the wolf, but of Lobo; not of the rabbit, but of Raggylug; not of the ruffed grouse, but of Redruff.

The success of this method was immediate and overwhelming. How many hundred thousand copies of "Wild Animals I Have Known" have been printed, I do not know, but I do know that of it and of Seton's other popular books of this period there have been sold nearly three million.

Seton's influence in arousing an interest in nature through this wide distribution of his works and his countless lectures, is immeasurable, but certainly it is far greater than that exerted by any other man of his time.

Seton's success brought many imitators. Few of them had his knowledge of wild life; many were not governed by the standards of the naturalist. All were criticized alike, and Seton, with the others, was classed as a Nature Faker.



"OF COURSE THE HERO IS FICTITIOUS. I GOT HIS NAME OUT OF THE TELEPHONE BOOK."

It was during this period that John Burroughs, referring to a forthcoming *Atlantic* article, said: "I've given your friend Seton the Devil." In the belief that Seton was his own best answer, the two men were brought together, and, within the week, Burroughs visited Seton at his Connecticut home and was his appreciative friend thereafter. Seton made no public reply to his critics. "My answer," he said, "will be in my works."

Within a few years he was in the position to which he had so long looked forward. Popular writing and lecturing were largely abandoned and he devoted himself to the completion of a work on "American Game Animals" which would embody his ideals of what such a monograph should be. The first volume appeared in 1925; the fourth in 1928. The whole includes 3115 pages and 1500 illustrations. Conceded to be incomparably the best work in its field, it was awarded the Daniel Giraud Elliot medal by the National Academy of Sciences. There is no higher commendation.

A student of Indian life from his boyhood, Seton at present is conducting, at Santa Fe, New Mexico, a self-founded institute of Indian wisdom where the lore and philosophy of the aborigines may be recorded. Recently, he has published a book on "Great Historic Animals" which seems to have considerably disturbed Mr. Peattie who proposes, indeed, to rend it page from page and consign it to the flames.

I have not seen this book. It may be just as bad as Mr. Peattie declares it to be, but if Seton, now in his seventy-seventh year and still active, wants to amuse himself by telling fireside tales of more or less mythical animal heroes, hasn't he earned the right to do so without being burned at the stake?

FRANK M. CHAPMAN.

American Museum of
Natural History,
New York City.

Nature-Faking: Unintentional

SIR:—I write to protest against an outrage such as has rarely before sullied the good name of a periodical supposedly dedicated to the dissemination of truth. I refer, of course, to the caption under the photograph of Rex Stout feeding a pet bird in your issue of September 18th. The bird is obviously a common Eastern crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchos brachyrhynchos*)—even a yearling ornithologist could tell you that much—yet your caption would have us believe that it is a "pet parrot"! If the American people do not rise up as a man to denounce this misrepresentation it will only show that they have forever lost the hardy spirit which once enabled our forefathers to make this a great nation.

INDIGNANT ORNITHOLOGIST.

New Canaan, Conn.

O SIRS:—Rex Stout (on page 6) feeding a pet —— *what*?? You'd better make a bee line as the crow flies, up that ladder.

MARGARET R. C. SMITH.

Hingham, Mass.

On appeal to Mr. Gabriel, author of "Mystery on High Meadow" (S. R. L., *Sept.* 18), *we received the following:*

SIR:—Sorry, you were wrong and I must report it a crow. However, if only to help feather Mr. Farrar's nest-egg, it is true that Stout has also a handsome red, blue, and gold bird named Nero, a Wolfe in parrot's clothing.

GILBERT W. GABRIEL.

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Clay and His Background

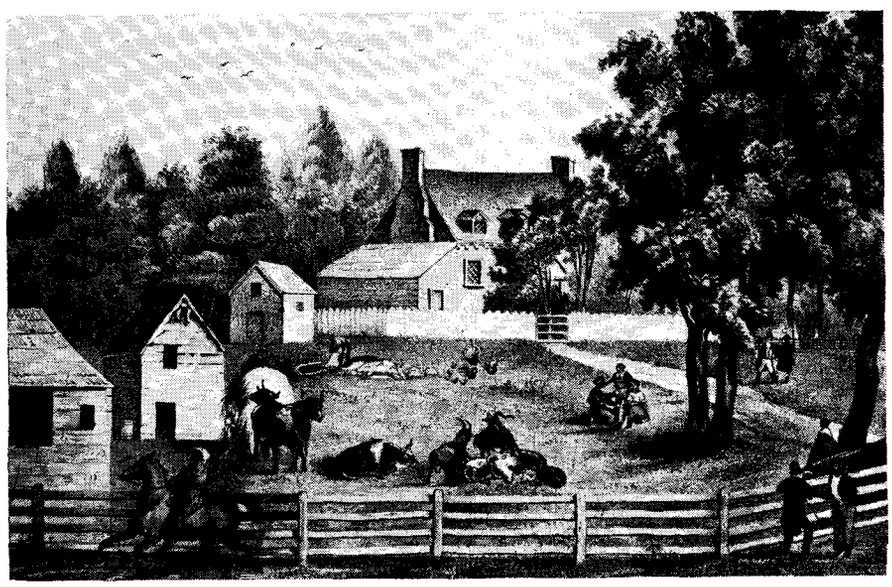
HENRY CLAY, Spokesman of the New West. By Bernard Mayo. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 1937. $4.50.

Reviewed by PAUL H. BUCK

THIS is the first time to my knowledge that Mr. Cipriani, the pioneer who somewhere around the year 1810 introduced the ballet dance to Lexington, Kentucky, has appeared in a biography of Henry Clay. And Mr. Cipriani is only a beginning. Mr. Mayo has conceived a new type of biography and has executed it on a monumental scale. The first of three projected volumes requires over five hundred pages to carry the story to the declaration of war in 1812 when Clay's national career had just begun.

The whole environment is in Mr. Mayo's pages—Hanover County, Virginia, where the boy Henry was reared, Richmond where he received his legal training, the western waters of frontier Kentucky into which he plunged as a young man seeking wealth and happiness, and the city of Lexington in the Blue Grass with which he grew into prosperity and refinement. The whole environment is there in detail, the minutiæ of every phase of life. We have never had a biographer do quite this before, at least in such detail and in such proportion. One thinks of Beveridge's "Marshall." But Beveridge's detail and discursiveness were devoted mainly to writing the political history of the times as a background to a political career. Mr. Mayo has hit upon the splendid idea of writing the social history of the times as a background to a political career. This will seem to some readers as though Mr. Mayo has introduced much irrelevant detail. But I consider it the most original and important contribution he has to make. It deepens political values and lends added significance to Clay's career. Even standing by themselves the many pages picturing the environment have value. It may well be that the reader will find it more desirous to learn what life in an early western community was like than to discover why and how Clay precipitated a war with England.

As a matter of fact the political history of Clay was superbly told in Schurz's classic biography of half-a-century ago, added to by such monographs as Pratt's "Expansionists of 1812," and placed in its national setting in Turner's "The United States, 1830-1850." I doubt whether Mr. Mayo's new research will alter our understanding of any major point in Clay's career or change the accepted interpretation of his character. Indeed the one important place in this first volume where Mr. Mayo shows unorthodoxy he is probably wrong. This is his treatment in the closing chapters of Clay's activities and Kentucky's interest in the movement leading up to the War of 1812. Here he is excessively partisan, much too uncritical of Clay and the Westerners, much too unfair and even bitter toward the British enemy and the New England Federalist. The war in his interpretation was something of a crusade for unhampered western development toward democracy and nationalism. Possibly some of this fervor arises from the narrative technique which brings back much of the contemporary attitudes and rationalizations. The analytical approach cannot help stressing as more important the selfish sectional and economic interests. It is the same contrast as between a Mark Sullivan recapturing the 1917 emotion of making the world safe for democracy and a Walter Millis treatise on unneutral economic interests. But even after making this allowance for Mr. Mayo's enthusiasm his partisanship remains a serious weakness.



HENRY CLAY'S BIRTHPLACE—HANOVER COUNTY, VA.

Reviewers will be generous in their advice to Mr. Mayo as to how he should write the remaining and more important volumes of his biography. Nearly every one will ask him to yield his partisanship, suggesting that Beveridge achieved a greater triumph in his impartial attitude toward Lincoln than in his partisan attitude toward Marshall. But I do hope that he stands firm against those who fail to see his objective and complain against the mass of social detail which in their eyes has no connection with Clay's career. It will indeed grow more difficult for Mr. Mayo to control this social environment as Clay's stage broadens from Kentucky into the nation. But I for one want to know and to feel what that union was which Clay saved in the evening of his career, not merely be told again of the drama in the Senate when the aged statesman made his last and greatest compromise.

Paul H. Buck is the author of "The Road to Reunion."

How Americans Look to Russians

LITTLE GOLDEN AMERICA: Two Soviet Humorists Survey These United States. By Ilya Ilf and Eugene Petrov. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1937. $2.75.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE

THIS book is the Russian equivalent in America of Mark Twain's "A Tramp Abroad" in Europe. Here are two Russians visiting the United States, laughing at us and our crude new western ways, just as Mark Twain, from the wild and woolly West, went to Europe and laughed at the effete and decaying civilization of what to him was the East. He made a funny book, not a profound book. No one ever read "A Tramp Abroad" and gleaned therefrom much knowledge of Europe. But he did absorb a lot of information about America and Americans. So the Russians, reading this book, will learn precious little profound truth about capitalism; at least, here is little except surface things which intelligent Russians probably knew before their two bright young men landed on our shores. But Russians will learn here something about their own national ideas, set in a sort of mirror-like perspective, and Americans reading this book will know more about Russians—how they think, what they feel, and what they are trying to do—something more than may be garnered out of many a sociological treatise.

This Russian humor is not bitter. America comes out of the crucible of their testing experiment a big, booming, bounding, laughing, thoughtless, wild-eyed land. Nor is the Russian humor explosive and spontaneous as America is. It is rather

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erudite, satirical, and by American tests, a bit forced. Possibly the real flavor of the humor is lost in the translation. Humor is a perishable product which cannot easily cross a lingual frontier. Any joke is partly a pun, partly an inverted tragedy, partly a dramatic impudence, and in part the flavor of some native spirit. When it passes from one language to another, humor wilts.

Nevertheless, this is an interesting book to read. It has been widely read in Russia and has gone through two or three editions. In it Russians will learn something of external America, something of the vast economic surplus which has created the bounty characterizing this land. They will learn something of the carefree spirit of our people, something of our mixed blood and our changing ideals. The Russians will know that we are moving slowly to the left in our social and economic thinking and action. Our leftward swing probably is no less speedy and no less steady than the rightward swing of Russia. Each country is dominated by a popular moral purpose to bring justice to the common man. America is doing it through the democratic process, a step at a time, making many false turns, retrieving, back-tracking, going ahead. Russia, which has no democratic tradition—and that fact looms bigger than a sore thumb throughout this book—is moving to the right through blood purges, calamitous mistakes, high visions drafted by butterfingers. Perhaps in a hundred years, let us hope less, as America drifts leftward and Russia comes to the right, the common man in the two countries will be equally well housed, well dressed, well fed, well educated, well environed by the good things of this life. And it may be also that in both countries the uncommon man, the man with special qualities, will continue to run the show as he does in Russia and as he does in America. The differences—and this, also, is read between the lines of "Little Golden America"—the differences between the ruling classes in America and in Russia, you can put in your eye. They do rule here and they do rule there. They take their rewards in both lands and sometimes they are ruthless and occasionally they are crooked and often they are great patriots, following a high and noble beckoning there to make life better in both lands.

One learns sadly from the back flap of the cover of this pleasant book that Ilya Ilf, one of the authors, who was seriously sick in America, subsequently died. No shadow of his approaching death falls across these pages. Here is a book for sophisticated Americans to read and ponder, that we may see ourselves as others see us. We have no right to sniff and snort in rage as we view the picture. Perhaps we are something like that—really!

A few years ago William Allen White made an extensive tour of Russia to see the Soviet experiment at first hand.

Adventures of a Young Man

GROWING PAINS. By Basil Harvey. New York: Oxford University Press. 1937. $2.50.

Reviewed by LOUIS J. HALLE, JR.

HAVING decided, in his middle twenties, to become a writer, Basil Harvey has now inaugurated his career by issuing his autobiography. In case that seems like putting the hearse before the horse, Mr. Harvey has a ready excuse. "Nearly all young men who start to write begin with autobiography, transparently disguised as a novel. The reason why I prefer the method I am using is that I don't care for fancy dress." Having given up acting in disgust after playing one of the brothers in "The Barretts of Wimpole Street," he is not enough of an actor to dramatize even himself. Diogenes would have been delighted to meet him.

BASIL HARVEY

Acting is only one of the vocations Mr. Harvey entered and promptly deserted. Son of a well-to-do M. P., he got through Harrow and one year of Cambridge before his father's bankruptcy left him destitute. On the basis of his sense of humor and a knack for getting away with it he became in rapid succession a secretary, a stockbroker, a shopwalker, an actor, an advertising agent, a busman, and a night-club cashier. His jobs alternated with fair regularity between New York and London. He came to know poverty and, on one occasion, semi-starvation. He saw life on both sides of the railway tracks; but his book is about himself, and what he saw is recorded almost exclusively for its bearing on his own growth. He takes the reader into his confidence, discusses his intimate hopes and fears without reserve, and analyzes his virtues and his foibles unsparingly. There is no good reason why the reader should care, but he does. For Mr. Harvey has something of the Ancient Mariner's gift. He is a born autobiographer.

Mr. Halle is the author of a personal narrative of travel, "Transcaribbean."

On Second Thought

THE SHORT STORIES OF KATHERINE MANSFIELD. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1937. $3.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE STEVENS

REREADING Katherine Mansfield's stories after fifteen years is a curious experience. Each one of them, even the briefer sketches, turns out to have made an indelible impression. The characters, the narratives, little episodes, innumerable descriptions, and even details of phraseology recur sharply to the mind; one has forgotten nothing. And the memory does not wait for the rereading. The beginning of a story, even sometimes a title, brings it all back, and brings back an acute recollection of the effect it produced. It is not surprising that the effect, however, is no longer the same as it was; that first impression depended on many things which cannot be recaptured: a mood of youth and discovery; a freshness and originality in the stories themselves and particularly in the personality behind them; and most of all—what one did not see so much when the stories were first published—the technique. For these stories now seem less like Chekov than they did then, and more like O. Henry. Katherine Mansfield employed the trick ending subjectively as O. Henry did objectively; her stories are not the slices of life, trailing off into vagueness, that they once seemed to be; they are tours de force, perfectly designed to arouse a particular response. And the response of fifteen years ago can be remembered, but not felt again.

How it would be to read the stories for the first time is hard to imagine. It is unlikely that Katherine Mansfield will again enjoy the vogue she had in the last years of her life. But her stories do not seem dated, even superficially. And she is still immeasurably superior to any of her imitators. A new reader of Katherine Mansfield will probably read her with almost as much pleasure, if of a different and more impersonal kind, as we used to. Surely the stories of children, particularly "Prelude," "At the Bay," and "The Doll's House," are first rate; and some of the sketches from "In a German Pension" are startlingly contemporary. The kind of young women Katherine Mansfield liked to write about, who thought it was exciting to make batiks and have tea in Bloomsbury, seem as far away as Amelia Osborne, and a new generation of readers may find the author's sympathy with them sentimental. But the young girls in love for the first time are dateless.

Katherine Mansfield is not the major writer some people once thought. But she was a first-rate minor writer. Her imitators have, by contrast, proved her originality, and this collection establishes her vitality.

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The Bowling Green by Christopher Morley

The Trojan Horse

XI. The Tea Grows Cold

IN the beautiful inner patio of Uncle Pan's luxurious home, what looks at first like a fountain is really a water clock (clepsydra). Beyond a peristyle is a glimpse of blue flowers in the garden. Uncle Pan is fussing over preparations for tea. He dodges among the pillars with a fly-swatter of antique and ornamental shape. Finally he lands the insect.

Got him!

He looks over the table; rearranges flowers and doilies; nibbles a salted almond. Dares, a perfect specimen of bulky and dignified British butler, with muttonchop whiskers and a B.B.C. accent but draped in classic robes, rolls in cakes and sandwiches on a Græco-Roman tea-wagon (like a small chariot or curricle).

Pan swats another.

Flies very bad today, Dares.

Yes, sir. I rather fancy it's all those 'Ellenes outside.

How do you mean?

Well sir, the Greeks always impress me as rather succulent people. A bit gamy in flavor, sir; just the sort of thing to attract vermin.

Contact! cries Pandarus, making another successful stroke. Flies or Hellenes, he says, it gives a sense of accomplishment when you actually smite them.—He hands the implement to the butler; sits at ease; polishes and replaces his monocle. —But there really should be some more effective method of demuscation.

Quite so, sir, observes Dares. I've wondered whether something might not be done in the way of a minutely reticulated mesh; an interstitial screen of thin fabric and very fine gauge. If you see what I mean, sir: transfusible for atmosphere but exclusive of parasites. I should add, sir, of course it would necessarily extend over the entire periphery of the apartment.

By Jove, that's a good idea. Excellent. It sounds practical. There might even be money in it. If this war ever ends, we could put it on the market. Well, more urgent matters impend. Bring in tea as soon as the ladies arrive.

Very good, sir. Here's the evening paper, sir.

Thank you. That reminds me, turn on the radio as you go. It's about time for Ilium.

Certainly, sir. I must warn you, the fountain is a trifle slow, sir. I've sent for the plumber.

As Pandarus lights a cigar and glances at the paper, the Radio Voice crescendoes from within. It is just becoming audible as Cressida and Antigone arrive. Uncle Pan greets them cordially, but in dumb show; ushering them to their seats with a gesture which indicates that he wishes to hear what the radio is saying, and presumes that they do also. When we catch the words they are:

". . . . in the public interest, was not unduly publicized on account of the important personalities involved. However, the incident at a certain well-known beach resort was followed at once by increased activity on the part of the enemy. The Greeks have pushed their attacks very fiercely, and not always in accordance with the rules of civilized warfare. I am sorry to have to report that today they were succesful in taking several Trojan prisoners, including the gallant Captain Antenor; against whom, it is said, General Agamemnon and King Menelaus had a personal grudge. This regrettable event was achieved by a clever ambush, in which our men were outnumbered and surprised. It goes without saying that it was resisted with obstinate courage, and the enemy were eventually compelled to retire."

(Pandarus, while listening attentively, is covertly watching Cressida and Antigone. We may presume that he himself has had private knowledge of the facts beforehand, as he shows no symptoms of surprise.)

"In a daring attempt to rescue Captain Antenor, Lieutenant Troilus was slightly wounded, but we are reassured that the injury is in no way serious. This brilliant young officer's conduct in the field has been so exceptional that an official gazette has just been issued promoting him to the rank of Captain. Folks, I know you will all join with me in congratulating this well-deserved honor. Captain Troilus has been granted several days leave to recuperate, and plans to go out of town for a brief rest, as exclusively reported in tonight's *Evening Trojan*. Read your newspaper for full coverage in News, Editorials, Features, Advertisements.

"Just a word more, friends, before the sand runs out. To show how little our morale has been disturbed by hard going in the field, the social life of the season continues unusually colorful. Miss Lyde, our ubiquitous quidnunc in modes and manners and all Milady's interests, tells me that much smart entertaining is being done. The outstanding function of next week, of course, will be the dinner planned by Lord Pandarus in honor of his niece Miss Cressida. This might almost be described as a second coming-out party; Miss Cressida has not been mingling with the gay throng for quite some time; but her uncle very properly thinks that in times like these we need all our—well, shall I say, available assets. Certainly Miss Cressida rates as one of the most charming, and while no list of the guests has been made public it is certain that some of our most prominent citizens are looking forward to Lord Pandarus' hospitality."

Dares brings in the tray of tea, and serves it during this palaver. Pandarus now waves to him to turn off the Voice, which the butler does as soon as he can; but not until the following has also been endured:—

"It's characteristic of our fair city that society refuses to let the campaign darken its spirits. Since the more expensive entertainments are taboo, old fashioned parlor games have become all the rage this season and have afforded many a laugh in exalted circles. I've been told that the favorite of them all is that good old diversion of our youth, Sardines, or Hide in the Dark. I guess most of us remember that the technique of the game involves a good deal of intimate personal juxtaposition. Is my face red! I hear that when the current broke down at the power plant the other evening, a certain exclusive group on Pantheon Place never even knew about it. All the sardines were so much enjoying their game. Folks, it all goes to show that it takes more . . . ."

As the radio stops Uncle Pan is politely passing cakes, which Antigone accepts but Cressida declines.

Antigone cries impulsively: O, I do hope he's not badly hurt? He was so *wonderful* the other night.

Only a scratch, Pandarus says. I called up the barracks.

I was so ashamed, chatters Antigone, if I hadn't danced with that terrible man, we wouldn't have had that riot. I just didn't know what it was all about.

(Antigone, we very likely observe, is not always as naive as she seems. She is covering up for Cressida, who is studying her own feelings).

I'm glad he's going away, she continues. Poor fellow, I thought he looked tired.

I don't know anything as tiring as bending spears into hoops, says Uncle Pan; unless it's writing poetry.

O, stop it! Cressida bursts out angrily. Do you like to sit here and be humorous while brave men are risking their lives?

We might expect Uncle Pan to be taken aback, but he seems calm and merely performs the assiduous host. Cream or lemon?

I don't want any tea. I'll go and walk round the garden.

Have a look at my delphiniums, I've been raising them for the flower show. I'm going to name one of them after you.

You certainly have a genius for mak-

(*Continued on page* 14)

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TODAY I explore the Arts with Hendrik Willem van Loon... For the first time I find in a single volume *all* the arts, integrated and interpreted by one who is himself a great artist in the humanization of knowledge.. Through 850 pages, written as only Van Loon can write, illustrated as only Van Loon can illustrate, with one hundred and eighty pictures, many of them in full-color, I watch man's age-long pursuit of beauty. Realizing at last the underlying unity of painting, architecture, music, sculpture and the so-called minor arts, I journey from Ancient Egypt and storied Persia to the Athens of Pericles, to the grandeur that was Rome, to Rembrandt's Holland, Beethoven's Vienna, and on to modern times... The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces, the solemn temples, the great globe itself... all these I view as I survey the noblest dreams and creations ever achieved by man. Michael Angelo, Johann Sebastian Bach, Richard Wagner and scores of other sovereigns of the arts illumine my pilgrimage by the power and the glory of their genius... In this cavalcade of the arts I walk side by side with troubadors, minnesingers and warriors, with master-builders and humble craftsmen, so busy creating they have no time to think of themselves as artists. I see a violin made before my eyes... ... I watch the symphony orchestra develop .... I stand awe-struck before the splendor of ancient civilization unearthed. So vast, so unified a chronicle of all the arts could be set down only by a man who was himself a kind of modern Leonardo. Van Loon is such a man. He writes, paints, draws, etches, plays the violin; he has the erudition of the Encyclopedists and the fervor of the Renaissance. Only Hendrik Willem van Loon could thus combine history, biography, esthetics, philosophy... the shop talk of the lords of creation. What he has achieved in this new book is partly a one-volume library, partly an art-gallery—a corner-stone book destined this month to take its place in one hundred and fifty-five thousand American homes*. But that is just the beginning: this story of the arts will be welcomed in every home interested in studying those impulses in the human race which produce the things of which we are proudest: Chartres, the Eroica, the Sistine Chapel.. Wherever the sense of beauty is fostered, not scorned and rejected, this book will give both immediate joy and lasting instruction. It took Hendrik van Loon 30 years to learn enough to write the Arts and 10 years to write it. But in one minute at my bookstore, or one minute on a postcard or on the coupon on this page I can make it mine.

H. v. L.

The Arts is the story of painting, architecture, music and sculpture, as well as the so-called minor arts, from the days of the caveman until the present time, done into a single volume by Hendrik Willem van Loon.

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The Trojan Horse

(*Continued from page 12*)

ing things complicated, Cressida says as she leaves.

Antigone looks a little worried at this tantrum.

Let her walk it off, says Uncle Pan.

I'm sorry; she's a bit jittery. That mix-up at the dance was rather a shock to her.

Try to keep her cheerful. Everything's under control.

She hates so much publicity.

It has its purpose. Did you ever hear of camouflage?

Something to wear, isn't it?

You pretend to make a thing very conspicuous, but actually it fades out of sight.

Antigone doesn't quite understand, but enjoys her tea and prattles on. She's so marvellous, you know how I adore her. But she really has been upset about something. I can always tell, when she spends so much time at her music. It's her way of keeping me quiet.

Dares appears with very much of an air. He announces Captain Troilus.

How splendid! cries Pan, apparently surprised. How are you? all right? Come and sit down, take it easy. You know Miss Antigone? Isn't it nice to introduce you as Captain. My dear fellow, congratulations! I'm so glad it's the left, we can still write verse, what?

And with plenty more fluency he gets the embarrassed Troilus into a chair. The boy, in civilian clothes, has his left arm in a sling.

Glad you're out of uniform for a change. No tea, you need something stronger. Brandy for heroes, you remember. Dares, brandy and soda for the Captain; not too much soda. This is grand, how very good of you to come. Antigone, take care of Captain Troilus while I tell our other guest.

He bustles off, leaving them rather flustered. Both start to say something at precisely the same instant; politely abandon it, and beg each other's pardon.

I'm so sorry, he says.

I was only going to say, is it all right for you to be out?

O sure, this isn't anything.

I guess the Greeks are all just laying for you, after what happened the other night. We thought you were incredible. I don't know how you did it. You must be frightfully strong.

It wasn't really strength. Just a kind of trick. There's a knack in it.

And that nice Captain Antenor who was having such a good time; what a shame!

Yes, bloody bad luck.

There's a pause. Troilus, out of topics, looks desperately at his left hand as a conversational memorandum, but is dismayed to find it swathed in bandages. This movement Antigone naturally misinterprets.

It *does* hurt, I can see.

No, it's only a scratch. Really. I say, what pretty clothes you—and your friend—were wearing at that shindy.

Did you think so? I'm glad. Cressida's afraid they were what made all the trouble.

I guess there'd have been trouble anyhow. It was about due.

(As his left hand is no use, he looks hopefully at the right, but that is occupied with the brandy and soda; so he takes a drink in hope of inspiration.)

I guess a war's rather a nuisance for people who aren't actually taking part, he ventures. How do you get along for amusements? Have you been reading anything worth while?

It's the funniest thing, I don't seem to get any chance to read. I don't know where the time goes to. There's always something. Cressida's cleverer than I am, she always finds time for her harp. She composes the loveliest little tunes sometimes. She writes them and I try to sing them for her.

That's wonderful. I wish I could hear you.

She's just written an air for a poem Uncle Pan gave her. I think maybe he wrote it himself.

The harp's a wonderful instrument, he says, groping for more material. Except in damp weather, it's so hard on the strings.

Isn't it awful? I woke up in the middle of a wet night and thought I heard a bullfrog in the tank. It was the A-string in the fifth octave, going boom.

Troilus is still using his fingers as mnemonics. Speaking of bullfrogs, I don't suppose you're interested in politics?

This is so unexpected a leap that Antigone can scarcely follow it; but at this moment Uncle Pan and Cressida return from the garden. He makes the unnecessary introduction. Well, this is delightful. I've been wanting you two to know each other . . . . He gives Antigone a peremptory hint. Come and see the flowers, I want to show you what we've picked out.

Now the subtle balances of hesitation are past. She knows it, feels the downward slope as she crosses the room. No need, or no use, to say longer what she has been reminding herself for days: "I don't have to love him if I don't want to. I don't have to love anybody." He looks so frightened, poor boy. Pain, fatigue, shyness, disbelief, all have shaken him; and he has exhausted on Antigone all he can remember of his prepared syllabus.

Her eyes take pity on his trouble, and she has forgotten her own. Something clearer than sight, lighter than thought, passes from her to the quality of his being, and is received where mannerly evasions no longer exist. She meets, and confers, something strong, simple, hungry, and intact. Something in man she never guessed before; never had chance to guess. Something in woman she had not known how to give.

His eyes turn away, after a while; he sits, almost without knowing what he does.

I'm sorry, he hesitates.

Don't say you're sorry. You've been saying it too often.

This is a thought so new that it takes him a moment to consider it.

I meant, I've used up all my politeness on your friend. I've got nothing left, except things people don't say.

We say different kinds of things, don't we?—And then, her voice breaking into an almost angry tenderness: I didn't *want* to meet you.

He looks up at her, worshipping. I didn't want to meet *you*.

I said I *wouldn't* meet you, she whispers; but you need me so.

The blue of the delphiniums is draining out into the dusk when the others come in. She is sitting on cushions at his feet, and they are talking quite calmly. They don't even bother to rise, and no one seems startled.

I suppose the tea's quite cold, says Uncle Pan. Well, we can all have a brandy and soda. Did you find anything to talk about? With the emptying syphon he makes a squawk of ironic exhaust.

Darling, cries Antigone, that delphinium he's chosen for you is the loveliest thing I ever *saw!*

Cressida looks at Pan over the rim of her glass. If I were naming a flower for *you*, I'd pick belladonna or deadly nightshade. Something poisonous!

(*To be continued*)

Family Album

THE LANGWORTHY FAMILY. By Elizabeth Corbett. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co. 1937. $2.50.

IN this day of bungalow and beaverboard architecture the ugly but solid mansions that were built in the past century still speak of an era when family life had not yet been disrupted by the movies, the radio, and the automobile. Colonel Langworthy built his mansion in what he thought would some day be the fine residential district of Mount Royal, but he was never a shrewd guesser in business affairs. Prospect Avenue retained its superiority and regarded the Langworthys with just the faintest disdain. That the Colonel's business fortunes were not promising was no cause for immediate anxiety. When he returned from his business in the evening he returned to the comfort of a family that was almost self-sufficient. But time was against it.

"The Langworthy Family" is a convincing and conscientious restoration of the past. Miss Corbett specializes in background and has the specialist's loving eye for all those details that evoke the atmosphere of time and place. But her characters are already too well known in fiction, from treatments of family life as old as Jane Austen and as new as "Ah, Wilderness!" This novel has reality and heart-warming quality. It lacks only distinction.

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THE EDUCATION OF
H*Y*M*A*N K*A*P*L*A*N
by Leonard Q. Ross

About the funniest book of the season Joseph Wood Krutch wrote in *The Nation:* "Hyman Kaplan has already become an established institution . . . It is hard to imagine a world without him . . . For me all really profound and imaginative misuses of language will henceforth be kaplanisms of a more or less accomplished sort." *3rd big printing,* $2.00

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by Dorothy L. Sayers
THE ZEAL OF THY HOUSE

The accomplished detective novelist has written the play presented this year at the annual Festival of Canterbury Cathedral, the occasion for which T. S. Eliot wrote "Murder in the Cathedral" last year. Miss Sayers' drama deals with the rebuilding of the Choir of Canterbury by William Sens, French architect. $1.50

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Prophets at the Crossroads

(*Continued from page 4*)

selections as do not suit his scheme are dismissed as the offspring of greed and fear—or, like the evidence of astronomy, omitted altogether. Which is curious, since astronomy offers the most compelling proof, to the lay mind, of something in the universe that transcends mere mechanism.

Heard mentions astronomy only to remark that "the unexpected way in which our mathematical calculations tally with astronomical observations shows that our minds and the universe-mind think in the same manner." A little further consideration of astronomy (as distinguished from what some astronomical theorists have said on their day off) might be less encouraging. So far as astronomy can yet determine, the chief business of the universe seems to be quite alien to anything that is called life by residents of this planet. We may possibly be able to think like God, on an infinitesimal scale, but there is to date no more evidence in the stars than there is on earth that the emotions which we regard as the finest flower of human character are adumbrations of any attributes of deity. Some faint perception of a Power in the universe, not ourselves, that does not give a damn for righteousness as we understand it—that is what you get, so far, from astronomy. The Voice from the whirlwind that told Job where to get off has yet to be effectively answered by Mr. Gerald Heard.

Something seems to be wrong, then, with the either-or formula; materialism may be as completely exploded as he says it is, and still his engaging cosmology may not be quite exact. It is possible to argue, of course, that Man is to date the highest expression of the Force that is the universe; but the definition of "highest," in that case, is biased by local patriotism. Man can write a "Hamlet," a Fifth Symphony, but he cannot yet bring forth Mazzaroth in his season, or guide Arcturus with his sons —achievements that may be rated more highly, by extra-terrestrial critics.

To be sure Mr. Heard says that his cosmology and morality are only tentative, and most of his evidence is, at first, insinuated with weasel words; but as soon as he gets going his hypotheses become not only certainties but premises. Every "if" is a springboard from which he takes off gaily to another "if," till presently you discover that these tenuous possibilities have somehow become the solid granite blocks of a pyramid, on whose apex stands Mr. Gerald Heard, triumphantly proclaiming, "Since we are now certain of the foregoing, it follows, etc."

For he atones for any carelessness about premises by sternly logical reasoning. "Must" is his favorite word, especially for people with whom he disagrees. If they believe such and such, they must come to the following conclusion; and accordingly they must behave thus and so, whether they do or not. This logic has some bearing on the accuracy of his picture of this mechanomorphic world, the City of Destruction from which we all must flee. It is a pretty bad place just now, God knows, but you can hardly put all the blame on Newton, Darwin, and Freud. Was it they who corrupted the devout Shintoists who are devastating China, the pious Catholics and Moslems who are wrecking Spain? Nearer home, too, logic is a convenient substitute for observation. "If life has no meaning and must end with its extinction on this globe, it is not reasonable and purposive to work for such a goal." There are people who find it reasonable to try to make a better world for their descendants to live in, even if those descendants, in the millionth generation, may be frozen out; but their reason is folly to Mr. Gerald Heard.

There are people who think it makes sense to try to behave decently, even if the dead rise not; but he has never met them. "Even the noblest, without this assurance," must seek recreation and amusement where they can; "a few noble workers have actually taken to physical drugs," others dope themselves with domestic affection or a desire for fame. Such anodynes are even worse, for home life means intensification of the individuality, ambition leads to arrogance—sins more heinous than adultery or embezzlement. There is no getting around it; people who refuse to accept the ethic deduced from the new cosmology go mad and beat their wives, plunge (after dreadful lives) razors and carving knives into their gizzards. This is so because it must be so.

You can prove anything by this sort of reasoning—criteria applied only to unfavorable evidence, the substitution of what logically ought to be for what is, calling a theory a theory when you introduce it and a fact as soon as you need it for a premise. Not the least of Heard's offenses is this: there is doubtless a good deal of truth, intermingled with error, in his cosmology, a good deal of sense mixed with nonsense in his ethic; but by his method it is utterly impossible to disentangle them. He darkens counsel by words without knowledge, and the hasty reader is likely to dismiss it all as hooey instead of trying to assay the percentage of precious metal in the ore.

And why waste space on such a book —especially when it is so badly written that only a dutiful reviewer is likely to read it through? Because it is a flagrant example of a type of thinking now common, and thoroughly pernicious—the either-or interpretation of history; pernicious because it encourages sloppy thinking, and because it is false. Belloc's book, far more respectable in style and content, falls into the same category of error; exclude all but two possibilities, set them down as inescapable alternatives, and you find that you have to overlook so protuberant a fact as Mussolini because he does not fit into your world-picture.

History seldom if ever runs in a channel with only two outlets. Napoleon Bonaparte, a man not unfamiliar with the forces that make history, once predicted that in fifty years Europe would be either Cossack or republican. Fifty years later republicanism was on the run, the Cossacks were barely holding their own, and Europe was dominated by Otto von Bismarck, a phenomenon not foreseen in Napoleon's either-or dichotomy. Abraham Lincoln, who possibly understood such matters better than Napoleon, once predicted that this government could not permanently endure half slave and half free; it must become either all slave or all free. Ask the sharecroppers if he was right.

Yet we continue to hear from numerous thinkers that civilization faces a dilemma; and most of them (not Belloc, who knows what words mean) seem to think that one of its horns is well cushioned and comfortable, just what we need. Passing over this error in terminology, which threatens to become as universal as the misspelling of autarky, it might be remarked that civilization cannot possibly be facing all the dilemmas that are currently discerned — either communism or fascism; either Catholicism or communism; either Roosevelt or ruin; either Copeland or catastrophe; either this streamlined Yoga by Heisenberg out of Blavatsky, or chaos. Something menacing and uncomfortable looms just ahead, which amateur zoölogists identify as one horn of a dilemma; more exact observation might classify the monster as a polylemma, a beast with seven heads and ten horns—and maybe some exits in between.

One of P. G. Wodehouse's philosophers in the bar-parlor of the Angler's Rest some time ago remarked that "Hitler stands at the crossroads—either he must shave it off or let it grow. There is no middle course." But Hitler and his facial adornment go serenely on, steering a middle course between the horns of the dilemma. Such navigation may be possible to larger and more valuable entities than Hitler's mustache.

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Singing Spain

LAMENT FOR THE DEATH OF A BULLFIGHTER and Other Poems. By Federico Garcia Lorca. New York: Oxford University Press. 1937. $2.50.

. . . AND SPAIN SINGS. Fifty Loyalist Ballads. New York: The Vanguard Press. 1937. $1.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

A YEAR ago, the fascists killed the finest modern poet in Spain. Franco's war of extermination claimed another bloody feather for its cap when it stood Federico Garcia Lorca up in front of a firing squad. That was in August 1936, when the fascists entered Granada. The poet's books were burned in the public square.

Lorca was versatile. His early verse was based on the forms and idioms of Andalusian folk poetry. But as well as folklorist, he had a reputation as a pianist, a theatrical producer, and the author of both tragedies and comedies. "Not since the time of Gongora had there been a poet of such stature in Spain. Never since the days when the common people had rushed to kiss the hem of Lope de Vega's cloak had a great Spanish poet been so loved."

Lorca was assassinated, and his books burned, but his burning words live on in the present book, beyond the reach of the arm of the bloody ape. Here the poems stand in their original Spanish, with an English translation, on the facing pages, by A. L. Lloyd. The "Lament for Ignacio Sánchez Mejías" is the finest poem. Mr. Lloyd writes the preface. He says that in his best poems Lorca "expresses all the color, the pride, and deep sorrow of Spain." Mr. Lloyd is an able translator also, though it is impossible, of course, to transfer some Spanish expressions into English. Lorca was of a gypsy strain. A certain fierceness shows in his poetry. Some of his images are very striking and beautiful.

All royalties from the sale of ". . . And Spain Sings" will be paid to the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy. This is a compilation in a most worthy cause and a book well conceived and executed. It consists of fifty loyalist ballads adapted from the Spanish by a number of well-known American poets, such as Edna St. Vincent Millay, Genevieve Taggard, Muriel Rukeyser, William Carlos Williams, and so on. The book, which has been edited by M. J. Benardete and Rolfe Humphries, is dedicated to the Spanish people with a quotation from Shaemas O'Sheel, "In their trenches we all stand at bay, and in their vanguard is our hope." From the foreword I take this, which seems to me very well expressed:

> When much of Europe has collapsed under the plague of Fascism and what remains threatens at any moment to yield to the new barbarisms, the people of Spain show how they have faith in our common heritage by fighting with fierce relentlessness on the high meseta of rock-ribbed Iberia.

Spain has emerged from medievalism, insurgent and intrepid, and this is the day of the rebirth of the Spanish ballad as a mouthpiece of the people. As "the ballad was the form utilized by [the Spanish] people when it fought to construct Spain, the same form it uses today for its reconstruction." Here are chants, ballads, and songs of heroes and heroines. The poem Miss Millay translates is dedicated to Lorca. There is both rhyme and free verse. Perhaps one of the most vivid of the poems is one translated by a young American poet, Willard Maas. Here is an excerpt:

> Who shall ever harness the hurricane?
> Who imprison the thunderbolt?
> Asturians of braveries,
> Basques of armored stone,
> Valencians of laughter,
> Castlians wrought of the soil,
> from the earth rising on wings,
> Andalusians, hot as lightning,
> swift torrent, river of tears,
> born of the guitar and the anvil.
> Men of Estremadura,
> bodies the color of rye,
> Galicians of rain and peace,
> Catalonians, the steady,
> Aragonese of noble ancestors. . . .

The catalogue is a noble one; and such are the men who are making an heroic stand in Spain. This book is thrilling evidence of their united spirit.

The Amateur Spirit

A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC. By Gerald W. Johnson. New York: Harper & Bros. 1937. $1.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT A. SIMON

ANYONE who ever has collaborated with a gang of amateur instrumentalists in a friendly massacre of Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms (or Balfe, Boieldieu, and Bizet) will join in an enthusiastic *Tusch* for Gerald W. Johnson. Mr. Johnson, an editorial writer by trade, is the examplar and champion of the fellow who plays music for the fun of it, letting the clinkers (as wrong notes are designated by professional bandsmen) fall where they may. He is for "bad music, made by a handful of amateurs in a private home," because the experience is stimulating for the performers and does no harm to the listeners, of whom none ought to be present.

Mr. Johnson, who has raised a coöperative flute at many confidential chamber music sessions, finds that a little night music entertains the participant, provides him with a wholesome hobby, and supplies him with a sympathetic understanding of exhibitions by people who aren't at all surprised when they get the right note the first time. His book makes good sense and good reading; but we suspect Mr. Johnson of being a much better musician than he pretends to be, in spite of his variations in the spelling of Prokoviev and his (or his typesetter's) reference to "Honneger." And the final chapter, "A Piano with Dirty Keys," is a charming revelation of Mr. Johnson's himself.

Robert A. Simon is music critic of The New Yorker.

HOLT HOLT HOLT

Fact or Fiction?

HE DID NOT DIE AT MEYERLING. THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF "R," A HABSBURG WHO BECOMES AN AMERICAN. Written in collaboration with Henry Wysham Lanier. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company. 1937. $3.

Reviewed by CHARLES DAVID ABBOTT

LAST winter Maxwell Anderson offered a poetic and dramatic explanation of what lay behind the strange death of Austria's Crown Prince Rudolph at the Meyerling hunting lodge in 1889. Here is another account, purporting to be written by a mysterious "R" who claims to be the son of Rudolph by an early unacknowledged marriage. It differs from Mr. Anderson's and from all the usually accepted versions by maintaining that the Crown Prince did not die at all. The suicide, or murder, or whatever it was, was elaborately faked. A corpse was substituted for Rudolph, and the Baroness Vetsera, who just happened in at the wrong moment, was accidentally shot. She had to be left as part of the *mise en scène*. The Crown Prince escaped to become a sort of gentleman-adventurer in South America, turning up occasionally thereafter to verify the facts of this remarkable story to his son "R."

The clearing up of this mystery occupies only a small part of the book. Most of it is about "R" himself and the fascinating American "Doctor" who adopted him, brought him to America, took him traveling through most of the world, and taught him everything worth knowing. The doctor was a genius in many ways; he was the brains behind Rudolph's misadventures, but he was something much more than that. He was the vital cog in the machinery of several nations, and he knew everybody of importance. He is a character quite worth meeting. Through him "R" knew everybody too, even at rather precocious ages, and the narrative of his experiences makes very lively reading.

Whoever or whatever "R" may be, he is a born *raconteur*. His anecdotes of royalty, especially those concerning the Sultan of Turkey whom he knew well, are most quaintly and pleasantly exhilarating. And he was always mixed up in everything exciting that was going on—except the Spanish-American War, which he missed by being rejected as a candidate for the Rough Riders, and this in spite of Colonel Leonard Wood's remark, after he had read the questionnaire "R" had filled out, that there was only one job he was fit for and that was the job of a Major General. The British, however, were not so exacting, and he managed to see plenty of service against the Boers. Certainly his life was as varied as the most passionate devotee of novelty could demand, and throughout it all he was always the epitome of amiability. Nor are any of the amenities lost in this autobiography, which reads like a cross between the Baroness Orczy and the Baron Munchausen.

Charles David Abbott is librarian at the University of Buffalo.

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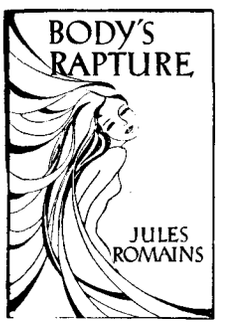

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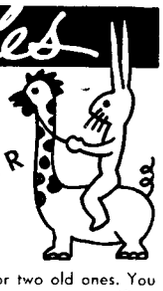

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The New Books

Belles-Lettres

BREAKING INTO PRINT. Simon & Schuster. 1937. $2.75.

Any book that Elmer Adler has anything to do with is sure to be a pleasure to the eye, and he is the editor of this compilation of papers in which each of a select group of authors tells of the difficulties of authorship and how such trials are met, also about their first published work. Mr. Adler has added biographical notes and comment. The authors are as follows, as they appear alphabetically in the volume: Sherwood Anderson, Robert Benchley, Stephen Vincent Benét, Pearl Buck, James Branch Cabell, Charles Waddell Chesnutt, A. E. Coppard, Theodore Dreiser, Joseph Hergesheimer, Robinson Jeffers, MacKinlay Kantor, Rockwell Kent, Sinclair Lewis. William McFee, H. L. Mencken, Christopher Morley, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Carl Van Vechten, Hugh Walpole, and Edith Wharton. A good variety!

The accounts are all characteristic of their writers, and it would be invidious to single out any above the others. It seems to this reviewer that even in the dark, with both hands tied behind him, he could pass a test as to who wrote which. And all are of interest and value to anyone interested in the craft of writing. Neophytes should take heart at some of the tribulations recounted. Any lover of literature will be glad to have on his library shelves such intimate talk from those with the gift of words, with in most cases samples of how their pages look before they go to the printer. If nothing very profound is said, there is plenty of evidence that good writers have a sense of humor. All in all, a successful experiment.

W. R. B.

Biography

THE MAKING OF A SCIENTIST. By Raymond L. Ditmars. Macmillan. 1937. $2.75.

This is a series of adventures in the author's life from boyhood to the present, and ranging from a gilded horse atop a livery stable to the study of snowstorms and hurricanes; from the first amateur collection of snakes and frogs to the professional collection of rattlers in Florida, horned-toads in California, the fer-de-lance, bushmaster, and giant bat in Martinique, Grenada, and Trinidad. To maintain a representative and healthy collection of animals at all times, and occasionally to be able to exhibit rare specimens, do not complete the job of the Curator of Mammals and Reptiles at a great zoo which has three million visitors annually. It is generally recognized that such positions should provide for and be occupied by men capable of adding to the substance of science by taking fullest advantage of the unusual opportunities. It has ever been a matter of gratification to his scientific colleagues that Dr. Ditmars's interests penetrate beyond his nominal responsibilities, to the authoritative descriptions of the native life, the correct zoölogical relationships and the finer aspects of the nutrition and psychology of his captives. This is a book about a "scientist's good times, and some of his disappointments." If it is episodic it is perhaps because he wishes to emphasize that his interests have been multiple, a fact which has added considerably to his zest for life. The book points no moral, but it should stimulate some youngsters to emulate his example, and some adults to give a thought to what goes on in the offices and laboratories which they do not see when visiting the Zoo.

H. W. S.

TAKING CHANCES. By Neal Harman. Farrar & Rinehart. 1937. $2.50.

If Daniel Defoe had lived the life of Neal Harman he might have written some such autobiography as "Taking Chances." A strong flavor of "Moll Flanders" invests its pages. This is not altogether a compliment. It has been said of Defoe that he was a dime-novelist at his lowest, a genius at his best—and one would not attribute genius to Mr. Harman.

The initial trouble with Neal Harman's career, which he regards as a failure, was his father's eagerness to make a gentleman of him. The son revolted against gentility and, at the age of sixteen, made off for America to take his chances, which he took apparently without realizing them. A series of hairbreadth escapes was the result. After a year or two of complete degradation, which he regards in retrospect as the best period of his life, he returned to England and got a job with a movie-making expedition outward bound for Burma. In the East he became involved in some blood-curdling oriental intrigue (the story of Fenton and the poisoned brandy sounds too true to melodrama to be true to life), and from there he went to South Africa, where his narrative ends amid native drums, charging elephants, and man-killing lions, in the approved manner of a former school of African-adventure writers.

Mr. Harman's writing is appealing in its great simplicity. One can forgive his introducing unconvincing incidents, and characters who "hiss imprecations" and utter "horrid curses," because of the ingenuous nature he reveals on every page of his book.

L. J. H., JR.

EGERTON RYERSON: His Life and Letters. By C. B. Sissons. Vol. I. Oxford University Press. 1937. $8.50.

From time to time news despatches from Loyalist Spain carry some mention of the Papineau-MacKenzie Battalion, a few hundred Canadian volunteers fighting with the International Brigade. The name of their unit memorializes another struggle for democracy which took place in Upper and Lower Canada exactly one hundred years ago, when the French-Canadian Papineau and the Scotch Canadian

(*Continued on page* 22)

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

WE are properly reproached (by Helen Lowitt of the Magic Circle Book Shop, Great Neck, L. I.) for having forgotten that Mr. Asa Don Dickinson, formerly at the University of Pennsylvania, is now librarian of Brooklyn College. ☞Unluckily, Old Q. is particularly prolific in such lapses just after a vacation: it seems as though, during any absence from toil, he forgets everything he ever knew. ☞He has had a notion lately to apply himself to the *Analects of Confucius,* added this year to the World's Classics series (80 cents). Confucius, if anyone, might hammer into us a little sense: we learn from Lady Hosie's introduction that the Sage's teaching was so absorbing that a jealous rival of his employer had to send 80 singing-girls and 120 thoroughbred horses to distract the Duke from his lessons.

☞Q. has only studied one of the W. P. A. State Guides, the *Vermont* (Houghton Mifflin, $2.50) but he finds it admirable, full of rich matter, excellently arranged and temptingly illustrated. The photograph of stump fences near Vergennes makes him hanker to get on the road again; and how excellent to be reminded of the legend (forgotten since boyhood) of the phantom steamboat on Lake Morey at Fairlee, Vt. There, where Samuel Morey was said to have invented a steamboat some years before Fulton, a ghostly Spensterschiff is said to frighten sentimental canoeists on nights of moon and mist. We cannot testify pro or con, but well remember that in the year 1908 we saw a waterspout on Lake Morey and were very much alarmed. ☞Brooklyn has another child poet, Katharine Carasso, aged 13, whose second book *Crystal Arabesques* is now announced by the Biography Press. ☞Whenever we travel on trains we always see yellow box-cars lettered SRL which startles us for a moment until we realize it's Swift's Refrigerator Line. The Business Department reminds us that next week's Autumn Book Number is an excellent time to renew or make sure of a regular SRL subscription. ☞Having made a good many errors ourself, it is pleasant to chide John G. Kidd, eminent bookseller of Cincinnati, for his telegram to Simon and Schuster (facsimilied in *Publishers' Weekly*) describing Van Loon's *The Arts* as a "magnus opus." ☞In the latest announcements of the Cambridge University Press (represented in U.S.A. by Macmillan) we find *The Meaning of Prestige* by Harold Nicolson (75c). This was the Rede Lecture at Cambridge last spring: it is "a comparative study of the political thinking of the European powers" and asks some highly provocative questions. ☞The Cambridge University Press, by the way, is building new and larger quarters for its London offices; and also ejaculates with pride that its ancient building in Cambridge has been cleaned and mended—"and a lift installed." ☞Houghton Mifflin announce that in this month will appear the Autograph Edition of the novels and stories of Willa Cather; designed by Bruce Rogers and limited to 950 signed and numbered sets, for sale by subscription.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
SEARCH FOR MY GREAT UNCLE'S HEAD *Peter Coffin* (Crime Club: $2.)	Prim professor of English visiting rich and eccentric uncle in secluded estate encounters antagonistic cousins, two decapitations, continuous excitement.	Grisly crimes can't subdue hilarity of richly plotted tale with satisfying love-interest, beaucoup thrills, and crazily effective sleuthing.	Extra Good
DEATH AT THE INN *R. Austin Freeman* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Young banker relates two cases of sudden death (pp. 1-129); old friend Christopher Jervis narrates Dr. Thorndyke's brilliant solution (pp. 129-312).	Freeman is unrivaled since Conan Doyle in evocation of London atmosphere and niceties of scientific detection, but he needs a new plot.	By all means
THE CASE OF THE SEVEN OF CALVARY *Anthony Boucher* (Simon & Schuster: $2.)	Vengeance of esoteric Swiss secretaries seen in two California killings—but Prof. Ashwin unscrews the inscrutable.	Occasionally top-heavy erudition offset by scandalous collegiate goings-on, rapid-fire dialogue, and a puzzling plot.	Zestful
THE WEDDING NIGHT MURDER *Christopher Bush* (Holt: $2.)	Lovely but wicked Anglo-Russian slain on bridal night. Suspicion points to elderly hubby, but Ludo Travers scents red herring.	Main murder motive somewhat beclouded by secondary robbery theme and Travers bluffs a bit too much in spectacular solution.	Agreeable

The Amen Corner

". . . one man in his time plays many parts. . . ."

This is the motto which Jack Jones has chosen for the title-page of his remarkable autobiography, *Unfinished Journey,*[1] which the Oxford University Press[2] published on Thursday, and every word of which we have read with astonished pleasure.

We were astonished at the sheer virtuosity of his style. It is almost as though he were *playing* his life story on some exceptionally flexible instrument, so varied, so subtle, so exactly suited to each scene, to each stage of his life is the language in which he tells it. There is also a peculiar kind of relish for the fluidity of language itself which we have never met anywhere else except in James Joyce.

It is this gift which is also responsible for the most remarkable feature of Jack Jones's career. He has been a professional speaker for almost every political party in England—first for the Socialists and then the newly-formed Labour party, then for the Communists, then for the Lloyd George Liberals (Mr. Lloyd George writes the Preface to the book), then for Moseley's Fascists. After this he retired in disgust to the Rhondda Valley in Wales, where he was born and brought up in a mining community, and wrote a novel, and this autobiography, on relief.

His description of life in a coal-miner's family, and of the members of the family themselves, is unforgettable. The sincerity of his account of his experiences in the Boer War and the Great War is amazing. His case-history in the study of post-war unemployment is of universal interest as a contemporary social document.

Another autobiography on the Oxford list which is as interesting in its own way as a post-war document is *Growing Pains* by Basil Harvey,[3] which, says the *New York Herald Tribune Books,* "boasts a less assertive cleverness than some of the other personal records of its kind, but it is one of the best of them, just the same. It has a palpable sincerity and a bright detachment that give it a special quality of its own. And Basil Harvey's life story, as he tells it at the age of twenty-eight, is interesting. What gives this autobiography a particular interest is a simplicity, concreteness, and power of detachment which one does not expect to find in a book of this sort. This young author does not indulge in social generalizations . . . He really makes pictures which arouse their own thoughts."

Autobiography reminds us of a new volume in the Phaidon Art Books series, that "revolution in art publishing,"[4] which the Oxford Press is publishing in this country, *Five Hundred Self-Portraits,*[5] Chosen, Edited and Introduced by Ludwig Goldscheider. Mr. Royal Cortissoz says (also in *Books*): "At rare intervals there comes to an author the opportunity to exploit a field which no one before him has ever touched. This is the good fortune that has befallen Mr. Goldscheider and he has rise to the occasion. His 'Five Hundred Self-Portraits' is an enchanting book and the full-page illustrations of which it is mostly made have been perfectly printed, some of them in colors. I don't see how artists, students and art lovers generally can quite get along without it, for it constitutes a living gallery of the masters, each of them gazing directly at us across the gulf of time."

THE OXONIAN.

(1) $3.00. (2) 114 Fifth Avenue, New York. (3) $2.50. (4) Write for 16-page illustrated catalogue. (5) $3.00.

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The New Books

(*Continued from page 20*)

William Lyon MacKenzie, grandfather of Canada's present prime minister, took up arms against the iniquities of colonial misrule. In his brilliant biography of Egerton Ryerson, Professor Sissons reveals much that is new in the life of one of the most influential figures in that struggle of a hundred years ago. Although MacKenzie and Papineau stand out as the leaders of the actual rebellion, the Wesleyan Methodists of Upper Canada, led by Egerton Ryerson, had helped mightily in preparing the ground, and after the rebellion collapsed it was Ryerson's fearless voice that was largely responsible for wresting final victory from defeat. A great preacher, a great democrat, and a great teacher, Ryerson probably moulded the future of Canada more than any of his contemporaries.

It is a misfortune that so little Canadian history is taught in American schools, for Egerton Ryerson should be recognized as a continental figure rather than an exclusively Canadian one. His influence extended far beyond his own times and his own province, but because he is a Canadian, this book about him will interest too few American readers. That it will prove invaluable to students of Canadian history goes without saying, but this does not seem enough. When Professor Sissons's scholarly task is concluded, his publishers ought to induce him to compress into a single, shorter book for popular consumption the wealth of material now designed for two exhaustive volumes.

M. D.

Fiction

CALL BACK LOVE. By Margaret Grant. Farrar & Rinehart. 1937. $2.

This story, according to a jacket streamer, was such a success as a magazine serial that the authors decided not to hide behind a pseudonym and have come out into the open as Rose Franken and William Brown Meloney. The story must have read better as a serial than it does as a book.

A young doctor, Andrew Lane, sets up a practice in Hollywood, where his wife Cornelia hopes to get a job in the movies. By a fine touch of irony, however, it is their plain and wistful little daughter Jennifer who leaps, all unconsciously and with the greatest of ease, into fame and fortune as a child star—even more famous than Baby Kitty (who performed the difficult feat of arriving on the lot in two limousines; vide page 40). Having a daughter so suddenly in the money makes complications for the Lane menage, complications which anyone who has ever read a magazine story could foresee, and for a while things look pretty bleak and it is a big question whether the Lanes' marriage may not go on the rocks. A soul-stirring climax involving a disappearance and a broken leg neatly resolves the whole situation, and the family is happy and normal again through the simple expedient of taking back the sloppy servant of their cottage days and buying four dogs, one without a pedigree. Thanks to Jenny, they are still rich, too.

It is unfair to dwell on the fundamental silliness of a book like this, because it makes no pretensions to be anything but what the jacket calls a "gay and tender story." If it seems neither especially gay nor tender, it is at least about Hollywood, and a wide public regards Hollywood as sure fire stuff no matter what. Here we have no matter what.

C. H. M.

DRUM UP THE DAWN. By Arthur Hawthorne Carhart. Dodd, Mead. 1937. $2.

Those who know their history will recall that, in the early nineteenth century, a certain Zebulon Pike led a little expedition of Americans into the Southwest, across the frontiers of what was then New Spain. They may not know just what rollicking heroes Pike's men were, or how villainous the Spaniards, or how seductive the Señoritas, unless they have read Mr. Carhart's "Drum Up the Dawn."

Rollicking Hero No. 1 is Sergeant Bill Meek, who leads a ragged handful of hard-fighting, hard-cussing, hard-loving American soldiers into a Spanish trap at Santa Fe, where they find intrigue rife. Mr. Carhart spreads the elements of romance over the pages of his novel with a lavish hand. But the intrigues don't quite make up for the lack of real plot. The Americanos are too dashing, the Spaniards too villainous. There's some pretty good loving, but the women involved are too beautiful to be true. The sum-total is something very colorful and a bit absurd.

L. J. H., Jr.

PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature; expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). All advertisements must be consonant with the purposes and character of The Saturday Review. Rates: 7 cents per word, including signature. Count two additional words for Box and Number. Payment in full must be received ten days in advance of publication. Address Personal Dept., Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

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CORNELL Ph.D., 28, male, married, interested in social sciences, books, stamps, ship-models, seeks employment: research, tutoring, or commercial. Type. Read French. Box 264-C.

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YOUNG MAN, 22, graduate of Harvard College, 1937, with highest honors in English literature, desires position with publishing house or newspaper. Has previous experience as tutor, librarian, and salesman. Is willing to start at bottom if future assuring. Box 266-C.

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Double-Crostics: No. 184

By ELIZABETH KINGSLEY

		1-L	2-X	3-J		4-X	5-P	6-O	7-M	8-D	9-S		10-F	11-Z	12-D	13-J
	14-T	15-N	16-A		17-I	18-T		19-K	20-O	21-Q	22-B		23-T	24-P	25-V	26-L
27-W	28-I		29-G	30-C	31-H		32-A	33-O		34-W	35-X	36-Y	37-S		38-A	39-F
40-B		41-P	42-J	43-D	44-U	45-V	46-E		47-B	48-H	49-W	50-Z		51-Y	52-H	53-K
54-Q	55-F	56-U	57-P	58-F		59-T	60-M	61-I		62-Z	63-C	64-K	65-L		66-D	67-N
	68-E	69-R	70-H	71-T		72-J	73-D	74-G	75-M	76-P		77-Z	78-V	79-E	80-W	81-X
82-K		83-O	84-M	85-X	86-F	87-Q	88-Z		89-B	90-F	91-M		92-S	93-D	94-U	95-I
96-W	97-Q	98-E		99-V	100-F	101-G		102-M	103-E	104-G		105-A	106-K	107-R		108-N
109-Q		110-N	111-Q	112-F	113-J		114-M	115-G	116-R	117-T		118-U	119-V	120-D	121-J	
122-U	123-O	124-T	125-H		126-G	127-O	128-I		129-Y	130-Q	131-R	132-J	133-E	134-L	135-O	
136-G	137-F	138-M		139-U	140-E	141-L		142-A	143-B	144-I		145-C	146-Y	147-U	148-R	149-V
150-O	151-W	152-Q	153-S		154-D	155-R		156-A	157-K	158-B	159-I		160-U	161-J	162-S	163-W
164-P	165-Z	166-C	167-H		168-N	169-Y	170-C	171-V								

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's International Dictionary.

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 16 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Giant slain by Apollo.

B. Character in "King John."

C. Medleys.

D. Character in "Twelfth Night."

E. Brought into harmony.

F. Persian epic.

G. Mahomet's first wife.

H. Character in "The Mikado."

I. Drama by Yeats.

J. Character in "David Copperfield."

K. Dynasty of Egyptian Kings.

L. 10-point typewriter type.

M. Poet laureate after Dryden.

N. Mottled, piebald.

O. Greek lyric poet (about 563-478 B. C.).

P. English naval hero (1758-1805).

Q. Famous poem by Henley.

R. Blow, whistle.

S. German poet (1797-1856).

T. Cycle of English Mystery plays.

U. Of no worth, trashy.

V. Famous World War battle.

W. Free from vulgarity.

X. Uncanny.

Y. Author of "Camille."

Z. Cried wailingly.

WORDS

142 32 38 156 16 105

143 158 47 40 22 89

30 166 170 63 145

73 93 12 43 154 120 66 8

133 68 98 140 103 46 79

58 39 100 10 137 86 112 55 90

101 126 136 104 115 29 74

31 52 70 167 48 125

95 144 17 159 28 128 61

3 161 42 132 13 121 113 72

106 19 64 82 157 53

65 1 134 26 141

7 60 102 138 114 91 75 84

168 108 67 110 15

150 135 6 83 123 127 20 33

57 5 76 41 24 164

111 109 87 130 152 54 21 97

131 69 148 155 116 107

92 37 162 9 153

59 124 23 18 117 71 14

94 56 147 160 139 44 118 122

119 149 45 99 25 171 78

80 163 151 34 27 96 49

2 81 4 35 85

129 146 36 169 51

62 11 77 50 88 165

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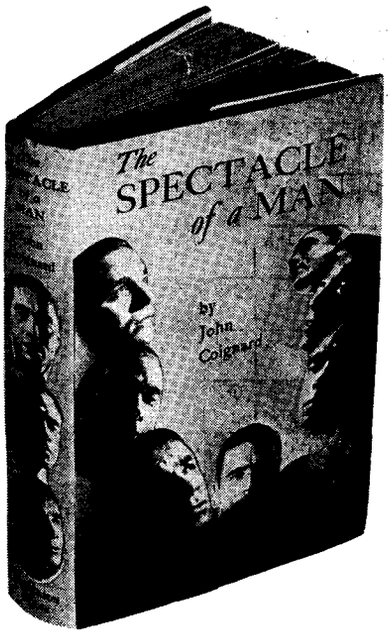

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